

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A fixing device comprising:

~~pressing/transferring~~ means for pressing, when a primary transfer toner image produced by transferring a toner image from a photoconductive element to a first image transfer body is to be transferred to a second image transfer body by secondary image transfer, said second image transfer body against said first image transfer body;

~~heat-fixing~~ means for heating said second image transfer body after the secondary image transfer to thereby fix a secondary transfer image on said second image transfer body;

~~a press-fixing unit means for pressing second image transfer body against said heat-pressing means comprising a first press roller configured to press said second image transfer body against said means for heating and a second press roller configured to press said second image transfer body against said means for heating;~~ and

~~conveying~~ means for conveying said second image transfer body from a nip for secondary image transfer between said first image transfer body and said ~~pressing/transferring~~ means for pressing to a nip for fixation between said ~~heat-fixing~~ means for heating and said first and second press rollers press-fixing means.

Claim 2 (Currently Amended): The device as claimed in claim 1, wherein said ~~conveying~~ means for conveying comprises an endless belt movable from the nip for secondary image transfer to the nip for fixation.

Claim 3 (Currently Amended): The device as claimed in claim 2, wherein said ~~conveying~~ means for conveying further comprises ~~attracting~~ means for electrostatically

retaining said second image transfer body on said endless belt.

Claim 4 (Currently Amended): The device as claimed in claim 3, wherein said ~~conveying~~ means for conveying further comprises ~~attraction-canceling~~ means for canceling electrostatic attraction ~~being~~ acting on said second image transfer body.

Claim 5 (Currently Amended): An image forming apparatus comprising:
first ~~image-transferring~~ means for transferring a toner image formed on a photoconductive element to a first image transfer body one time or a plurality of times by primary image transfer;
second ~~image-transferring device~~ means for transferring a primary transfer toner image transferred to said first image transfer body by said first ~~image-transferring~~ means for transferring to a second image transfer body by secondary image transfer;
~~a fixing unit means for fixing a secondary transfer toner image transferred to said second image transfer body by said second image transferring device~~ comprising means for heating said second image transfer body, a first press roller configured to press said second image transfer body against said means for heating, and a second press roller configured to press said second image transfer body against said means for heating; and
~~conveying~~ means for conveying said second image transfer body from said second ~~image transferring~~ means for transferring to said fixing ~~means~~ unit.

Claim 6 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein said ~~conveying~~ means for conveying comprises an endless belt movable from a nip for the secondary image transfer to a nip for fixation.

Claim 7 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 6, wherein said ~~conveying~~ means for conveying further comprises ~~bias-applying~~ first means for applying a bias, which is opposite in polarity to a bias applied to said first image transfer body for the secondary image transfer, to said endless belt.

Claim 8 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein said ~~bias applying~~ first means for applying applies the bias to said endless belt at the same time as the bias for the secondary image transfer is applied to said first image transfer body for thereby assisting said secondary image transfer.

Claim 9 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 7, further comprising ~~fixing~~ ~~bias-applying~~ second means for applying a bias, which is opposite in polarity to the bias applied by said ~~bias-applying~~ first means for applying, to said endless belt conveying said second image transfer body after fixation.

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 7, further comprising ~~grounding~~ means for grounding said endless belt.

Claim 11 (Currently Amended): A color image forming apparatus comprising:
~~toner image-forming~~ means for forming, in accordance with image data, a toner image of a particular color on each of a plurality of photoconductive elements;
~~image-transferring~~ means for sequentially transferring toner images of different colors formed on said plurality of photoconductive elements to a first image transfer body one above

the other by primary image transfer to thereby complete a primary transfer toner image; and

a transferring/fixing unit ~~means for transferring~~ configured to transfer the primary transfer toner image to a second image transfer body by secondary image transfer and ~~fixing to~~ fix said secondary transfer toner image on said second image transfer body, said transferring/fixing ~~means~~ unit comprising ~~means for heating a second image transfer body, a first press roller configured to press said second image transfer body against said means for heating, a second press roller configured to press said second image transfer body against said means for heating, and~~ an endless belt configured to convey said secondary image transfer body from a nip for the secondary image transfer to a nip for fixation.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 11, wherein said transferring/fixing ~~means~~ unit further comprises ~~a plurality of rollers including a first roller facing either one of a fixing roller, which fixes the secondary transfer toner image on said second image transfer body and a fixing belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and a second~~ first roller facing said first image transfer body[[,]] and said endless belt is passed over said ~~plurality of first, first press, and second press rollers.~~

Claim 13 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 12, further comprising ~~bias-applying~~ first means for applying a bias, which is opposite in polarity to a bias for the secondary image transfer applied to said first image transfer body, to said ~~second~~ first roller.

Claim 14 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, wherein said ~~bias-applying~~ first means for applying applies the bias at the same time as the bias for the

secondary image transfer is applied to said first image transfer body for thereby assisting the secondary image transfer.

Claim 15 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, further comprising:

~~fixing bias-applying~~ second means for applying a bias, which is opposite in polarity to the bias applied by said ~~bias-applying~~ first means for applying, to said first press roller; and ~~grounding~~ means for grounding said endless belt in contact with said endless belt.

Claim 16 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 13, further comprising ~~grounding~~ means for grounding said endless belt in contact with said endless belt.

Claim 17 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein said endless belt is passed over a plurality of rollers including said first ~~roller~~, first press, and said second press rollers ~~roller~~ and a third roller positioned downstream of said first roller in a direction of conveyance.

Claim 18 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 17, further comprising ~~endless belt heating~~ means for heating said endless belt.

Claim 19 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 12, further comprising ~~moving~~ means for causing said endless belt and said first image transfer body to selectively contact each other.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein ~~said fixing roller~~ at least one of the first and second press rollers accommodates ~~internal heating~~ means for heating at least one of the first and second press rollers therein.

Claim 21 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 12, further comprising at least one of ~~internal heating~~ first means for heating disposed in any one of said plurality of first, first press, and second press rollers and ~~external heating~~ second means for heating positioned outside of the one roller.

Claim 22 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein ~~said first roller consists of two divided rollers facing either one of said fixing roller and said fixing belt while~~ said second roller consists of two divided rollers facing said first image transfer body.

Claim 23 (Currently Amended): A color image forming apparatus comprising:
~~toner image forming~~ means for sequentially forming, in accordance with image data, color toner images on a photoconductive element with toners of ~~four~~ a plurality of different colors;

~~image transferring~~ means for sequentially transferring the color toner images from said photoconductive element to a first image transfer body one above the other by primary image transfer to thereby complete a primary transfer toner image; and

a transferring/fixing unit means for transferring configured to transfer the primary transfer toner image to a second image transfer body by secondary image transfer and ~~fixing to~~ fix a secondary transfer toner image on said second image transfer body, said

transferring/fixing ~~means~~ unit comprising ~~means for heating a second image transfer body, a first press roller configured to press said second image transfer body against means for heating, a second press roller configured to press said second image transfer body against means for heating, and~~ an endless belt configured to convey said second image transfer body from a nip for the secondary image transfer to a nip for fixation.

Claim 24 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 23, wherein said transferring/fixing ~~means~~ unit further comprises ~~a plurality of rollers including a first roller facing either one of a fixing roller, which fixes the secondary transfer toner image on said second image transfer body and a fixing belt passed over a plurality of rollers, and a second~~ first roller facing said first image transfer body[[,]] and said endless belt is passed over said ~~plurality of first, first press, and second press~~ rollers.

Claim 25 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 24, further comprising ~~bias-applying~~ first means for applying a bias, which is opposite in polarity to a bias for the secondary image transfer applied to said first image transfer body, to said ~~second~~ first roller.

Claim 26 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 25, wherein said ~~bias-applying~~ first means for applying applies the bias at the same time as the bias for the secondary image transfer is applied to said first image transfer body for thereby assisting the secondary image transfer.

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 25, further

comprising:

~~fixing bias-applying~~ second means for applying a bias, which is opposite in polarity to the bias applied by said ~~bias-applying~~ first means for applying, to said first press roller; and grounding means for grounding said endless belt in contact with said endless belt.

Claim 28 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 25, further comprising grounding means for grounding said endless belt in contact with said endless belt.

Claim 29 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 28, wherein said endless belt is passed over a ~~plurality of rollers including~~ said first roller, said first press roller, said second press roller and a third roller positioned downstream of said first press roller in a direction of conveyance.

Claim 30 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 29, further comprising ~~endless belt heating~~ means for heating said endless belt.

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 24, further comprising ~~moving~~ means for causing said endless belt and said first image transfer body to selectively contact each other.

Claim 32 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein said ~~fixing roller~~ at least one of the first and second press rollers accommodates ~~internal heating~~ means for heating at least one of the first and second press rollers therein.

Claim 33 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 24, further comprising at least one of ~~internal heating~~ first means for heating disposed in any one of said ~~plurality of first and second press rollers and external heating~~ second means for heating positioned outside of the one roller.

Claim 34 (Currently Amended): The apparatus as claimed in claim 24, wherein ~~said first roller consists of two divided rollers facing either one of said fixing roller and said fixing belt while~~ said second roller consists of two divided rollers facing said first image transfer body.

Claim 35 (New) A fixing device comprising:

a conveying belt held in contact with an intermediate image transfer body to which a toner image is transferred from a photoconductive element, forming a nip for image transfer; and

a rotary heating member forming a nip for fixation in contact with said conveying belt.

Claim 36 (New) The fixing device as claimed in Claim 35, further comprising sucking means for causing said conveying belt to suck a sheet.

Claim 37 (New) The fixing device as claimed in Claim 36, further comprising canceling means for canceling a condition in which the sheet is sucked by said conveying belt.

Claim 38 (New) In an image forming apparatus comprising a photoconductive element, an intermediate image transfer body to which a toner is transferred from said

photoconductive element and a fixing device, said fixing device comprising:

a conveying belt held in contact with said intermediate image transfer body to thereby forming a nip for image transfer, and

a rotary heating member forming a nip for fixation in contact with said conveying belt.

Claim 39 (New) The image forming apparatus as claimed in Claim 38, further comprising bias voltage applying means for applying a bias voltage, which is opposite in polarity to a voltage for secondary image transfer supplied to said intermediate image transfer body, to said conveying belt.